

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

DATE, TIME AND

PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, March 22, 2001, 7:30 a.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members: Tom Laging

Others: Bradd Schmeichel and Wynn Hjermstad (Urban Development); Dave Hedges, Jim Brown, and Jerry Rausch (Scottish Rite Temple); Jerry Shorney (Parks & Recreation); Larry Hennings (Lincoln Public Schools); Bob Ripley (DAS/SBD Staff); Ed Zimmer and Missy Minner (Planning Dept.)

STATED PURPOSE

OF THE MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

Scottish Rite Temple -

Laging stated that this issue has been previously discussed three times by various members of the Commission. Staff has suggested that a certificate of no material effect be issued since there has been a failure to reach a quorum to allow action to be taken on this item.

Ripley indicated that this is a good architectural solution for the building. He appreciates their willingness to work with the suggestions of the Commission.

Environs area plan for Lincoln High -

Hennings guessed that the time frame for this portion of the plan is 3-5 years, however it is difficult to project given the restrictions they have.

Laging objects to open storage along the parkway. Ripley indicated that could be screened with landscaping.

Laging stated that the Commission is pleased LPS went forward with the Master Plan.

Ripley suggested leaving a gap in the landscaping at the main entrance of Lincoln High to leave an open view. Hennings stated that the plan includes hiring someone to plan the landscaping.

South Mall Improvements -

Hjermstad explained that Urban Development has funds that are used to make improvements to neighborhoods. The neighborhood associations must be willing to work with them. The neighborhood identifies their issues and concerns. Those are the items that are given priority, within reason. An example of the improvements associated with this plan is the small park at 19th & A Streets in the Near South

neighborhood.

The neighborhood is opposed to moving the trees along the South Mall. According to City staff the trees and the street have approximately 20 years before they will need to be replaced.

The neighborhood would like to have the medians cleaned up and planted with turf. Parks has indicated that maintenance would not be an issue if that is the action taken.

Laging suggested ornamental lighting be considered. There is a district light that they would like to make more generously available throughout the environs district. Hjermstad felt that might be a problem because it is expensive, but thought that it might be possible to phase it in. Laging felt that the Commission could support an orderly phasing process.

He added that he would prefer to see the funds be balanced across landscaping, lighting, furniture, and sidewalks in order to give an overall sense of what could be done in the area. Hjermstad agreed that a prototype area would be nice. She suggested that to better benefit the neighborhood, the medians be cleaned up and planted with turf and something more intensive be done closer to the Capital.

Ripley suggested the also consider moving utility lines underground. Hjermstad stated that they have looked into that on other projects and it is very expensive. Ripley indicated that a recent project he was involved in showed that the cost is somewhat negotiable.

Hjermstad stated that they will begin cleaning up the medians and installing turf. They will investigate the cost of the sidewalks. Ripley suggested that sidewalks being replaced that don't match the future alignment, are repaired at minimum cost so that no greater investment than necessary is removed.

Zimmer felt the order of priorities would be the medians, the sidewalks, and then an element that could be done as the future vision.

Laging suggested this be put on the next agenda as a formal presentation to the Commission. He offered to donate a drawing to be taken to the neighborhood. Ripley offered to provide a drawing for the lighting fixtures. He added that the lighting is really a safety issue.

Hjermstad asked if the Commission still felt the landscaping in the median should be as intensive as originally proposed. Laging felt there would be differing opinions between the members. He felt simplified landscaping in the median was acceptable.

Meeting time for Commission -

Zimmer stated that this issue will need to be addressed by phone.

Miscellaneous -

- Zimmer indicated that the Parks Department is eager for a subcommittee to work with them on the fountains along Centennial Mall to determine what can be done to make them safe when they can no longer be run.
- Ripley stated that Laging had given a presentation to the Public Building Commission on the vision of the boundaries of the environs district.